

S E C R E T ANKARA 000859

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR P, EUR, EUR/SE, NEA AND NEA/NGA;
NSC FOR AMB. KHALILZAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/02/2013
TAGS: PREL MARR PREF PHUM TU IZ UNSC
SUBJECT: NORTHERN IRAQ: MULTIPARTY TALKS (V) - TURKS
UNWILLING TO DISCUSS MILITARY PLANS W/IRAQI KURDS, PREPARED
TO DISCUSS POLITICAL FUTURE OF IRAQ

REF: A. LEMPERT-PEARSON E-MAIL OF 2/1/03

- 1B. ANKARA 800
- 1C. ANKARA 629 AND PREVIOUS
- 1D. STATE 18029

Classified by DCM Robert Deutsch. Reasons 1.5 b and d.

11. (S) DCM met MFA DG for Middle East Tahsin Burcuoglu February 3 to discuss the upcoming multi-party talks per Ref 1A. Burcuoglu said the Turks would set up separate bilats for Amb. Khalilzad and his delegation at MFA and at TGS on February 5. For the multi-party talks on Feb. 6, Burcuoglu said, "we are not ready to have multi-party talks without the Iraqi Turkmen Front. A US-Turkey-KDP/PUK meeting is not acceptable to us. We are not prepared to discuss a Turkish military presence in northern Iraq with the Kurds. On numbers of troops and other details, they will be notified...that's all. We will never discuss Turkish military presence issues with those guys or ask for their permission. Discussing the political fate and future of Iraq and northern Iraq is another issue and we are prepared for those talks with the Kurds and the ITF."

12. (S) DCM pushed back using Ref A points but Burcuoglu wouldn't budge. He told us his instruction from U/S Ziyal was to ask if the US was requesting talks without the ITF to appease Barzani. He then tried to argue that the ITF was the sole legitimate representative of the Iraqi Turkmen - a principled position which Turkey would not change - but that the KDP and the PUK were not the only reps of the Iraqi Kurds. DCM noted that being unable to have the US-Turkey-KDP/PUK talks would prevent us from dealing with issues that needed to be addressed. Burcuoglu said the MFA position was clear - talks must include the ITF and the Turks would not discuss military planning with the Kurds. Turkey was ready for US-Turkey-KDP/PUK-ITF talks on the 6th on the future of Iraq and northern Iraq.

13. (S) Burcuoglu also expressed Turkish security concerns about holding the Iraqi opposition conference in northern Iraq if the date slips beyond mid-February. He referred to rumors that US air strikes would begin by Feb. 18 and a ground assault by Feb. 28, and wondered how the conference could go forward with such possibilities hanging over its head. He added that Turkey was increasingly concerned about Iranian involvement with the opposition, and suggested that INC leader Ahmed Chalabi might declare a provisional government from Iran. We urged Burcuoglu to raise all of Turkey's concerns with Amb. Khalilzad on Feb. 5.

PEARSON